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Europe deal done on world's first comprehensive AI rules

The bloc's 27 countries overcame big differences on various points, including generative AI and police use of facial recognition surveillance, to sign a tentative political agreement for the Artificial Intelligence Act. "Deal!" tweeted European Commissioner Thierry Breton. "The EU becomes the very first continent to set clear rules for the use of AI," he said

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CEO of *The New Indian Express* Lakshmi Menon, former Lt Governor of Puducherry Kiran Bedi, Editorial Director of *TNIE* Prabhu Chawla and Resident Editor of *TNIE* Odisha Siba Mohanty light the lamp at the Devi Awards, in Bhubaneswar on Saturday. The Devi Awards were conferred upon Lipika Singh Darai, Pankaja Sethi, Aboli Sunil Naravane, Sukanti Meher, Akshita Bhanja Deo, Mrinalika Bhanja Deo, Rosalin Patsani, Dr Swati Nayak, Ramita Singh, Monalisa Bal, Sushmita Bagchi and Gayatribala Panda | DEBABRATA MALLICK

REPORT: P5

Moitra set to challenge her expulsion in SC

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

TRINAMOOL Congress leader **Mahua Moitra**, expelled from the Lok Sabha on cash-for-query charges on Friday, is set to approach the Supreme Court to challenge the decision of the ethics committee, according to sources.

"Moitra might approach the Supreme Court soon. She has been consulting legal experts to seek their views," said a source. She was expelled after the Lok Sabha adopted the report of the ethics committee, which held her guilty of "unethical conduct" and contempt of the House. The panel also recommended an "intense, legal, institutional inquiry" by the Centre.

Former Lok Sabha secretary general P D T Achary said Moitra has the option of challenging the expulsion in the Supreme Court on the grounds of natural justice and principles of fair hearing. He said the ethics panel does not have the jurisdiction to punish a member. "The ethics committee recommended expulsion on account of 'unethical conduct' and serious misdemeanor. How do they define unethical conduct?" he asked, adding the allegations that Moitra received cash and gifts from a businessman to ask questions in the Lok Sabha should have been probed by the privileges committee. While the panel held her guilty of compromising national security by sharing her Parliament login ID and password with unauthorised persons, Achary argued that there were no rules that prohibit MPs from doing so. "In the absence of any rule of law, what violation are they talking about? Under Article 20 of the Constitution, a person cannot be punished unless there is an offence committed as per law," he asserted.

SAME SEAT LIKELY FOR MOITRA

Mahua Moitra's expulsion would dominate Mamata's protest in Delhi on Dec 17. Party sources say Moitra has been directed to spend as much time as she used to give to Krishnanagar, her constituency, as Mamata gave a clear hint that the Trinamool would field her from the same seat in the next LS polls | P8

Moitra was not allowed to speak on the floor of the House. She should have been allowed to cross-examine those who had made allegations against her. This is an accepted practice

P D T Achary, former LS secretary general

Day after Ali joined LS walkout, BSP suspends him

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

A day after BSP's Lok Sabha member **Kunwar Danish Ali** joined the Opposition walkout from the House in protest against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra's expulsion, his party suspended him for anti-party activities. All other BSP members had remained seated in the House during the walkout.

BSP general secretary Satish Chandra Misra wrote to the Amroha MP saying the action was taken in the interest of the party as he didn't pay heed to oral warnings on multiple occasions. "You were told verbally many times that you should not make any statement or take any action against the policies, ideology and discipline of the party, but despite this you have been continuously acting against the party," Misra's letter read. "Today's decision is unfortunate," Ali said. It is speculated that he could contest the 2024 Lok Sabha polls on a Congress ticket.

Registration for Yuva Nidhi scheme from December 21

RAMAKRISHNA BADSESHI @ Kalaburagi

MINISTER for Medical Education and Skill Development Dr Sharanprakash Patil said on Saturday that registration for the Yuva Nidhi scheme, the fifth guarantee of the Congress government, will start from December 21.

Dr Patil told *TNIE* that the scheme will be launched next month. The date of its launch will be decided shortly. Beneficiaries will start receiving financial assistance after the launch of the scheme. Nearly five lakh youth will benefit from the scheme, he said.

Under the scheme, Rs 3,000 per month will be given to unemployed graduates and Rs 1,500 to diploma graduates. P4

At ₹290 cr, highest blackmoney haul

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

AFTER four consecutive days of searches by the Income Tax department at Congress' Rajya Sabha member Dheeraj Sahu's residences and his Boudh Distillery premises in Jharkhand and Odisha, ₹300 crore in cash has been seized. This is the highest-ever haul by the agency in a single operation, a source said. As of now, notes worth ₹290 crore have been counted.

The volume of money is such that all cash-counting machines used for the operation conked off. The department has brought in more machines. I-T Department Director General Sanjay Bahadur said it will take at least two more days to count it. Only then will the department share information. The department also seized three bags of jewellery.

The raids began on December 6. So far, 30 almirahs have been seized at Baldeo Sahu & Group of Companies, one of the largest country-liquor manufacturers in Odisha. Of the 30 almirahs, nine were filled with bundles ₹100, ₹200 and ₹500 notes.

Baldeo Sahu & Group of Companies is reported to be a partnership firm of Boudh Distillery, which is linked to Sahu. Searches are on at the Ranchi and Lohardaga residences of Sahu and in Odisha's Bolangir, Sambalpur, and Kalahandi.

They have also seized ₹7 crore from Sahu's Lohardaga residence. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said nobody would have seen such a pile of cash in their lifetime except bank employees.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh sought to build distance from Sahu, saying, "The Indian National Congress is in no way connected with the businesses of Dheeraj Sahu, MP. Only he can explain, and should explain, how huge amounts of cash have been reportedly unearthed."

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